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THE JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF SANITARY AND MORAL PROPHYLAXIS

VOL. VI.

APRIL, 1915

NO. 2

A JOINT MEETING OF THE COMMISSION ON SOCIAL MORALITY
OF THE NATIONAL BOARD OF THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN
ASSOCIATION AND THE SOCIETY OF SANITARY AND MORAL PROPHY-

APRIL, 1915

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THE FOLLOWING PAPERS WERE READ:

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The Executive Committee, realizing that it is difficult for the members of The Society of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis to keep in close touch with the details of the Society's work, and feeling that it is important for them to do so, arranged the program for the meeting of February 25 with the hopes of presenting, through the representatives of several organizations before which the Society's lecturers had spoken, the results of these lectures and suggestions for the improvement of this department of the Society's work. Their remarks and comments taken from reports upon other lectures are presented in this number of the Journal.

The May 1914 issue of the Journal has been exhausted. The office has frequent calls for this issue, and would greatly appreciate it if any member would kindly return to the office any copy which he may have.

A LECTURE TO A WOMAN'S CLUB

MRS. A. C. FISK

*Chairman, Committee on Literature, New York State
Federation of Women's Clubs*

The club women of today are advanced along all lines of work for human betterment, so naturally they are awake to the necessity for sex education. To their minds the chief problem, however, is the who, what and how of its presentation.

Of first and of chief importance is the personality of the speaker. There are subjects which can be presented by almost anyone, and still have a most telling effect; but this, being of so intimate a nature, takes on the color of the lecturer's personality. Consequently, if the speaker be lacking to the slightest degree the essentials of personality, charm, refinement and idealism, the subject is in danger of losing that element of beauty which it so much needs to give it its proper place in the minds of its hearers.

It is the positive side of this subject which should be presented to the club women. Without doubt, it is necessary for them to become acquainted with the awful consequences of immorality, and to have some idea of the widespread nature of the consequences; but only as a sort of background to the great and inspiring truths which form the positive side of this question. Let the shadows be simply referred to in passing; but dwell upon the beauties of the right ideals.

Equally essential with these two requirements is its manner of presentation. We cannot do more here than simply say, there must be no hesitancy, no beating around the bush; no mistaken use of bluntness under the guise of frankness. A straightforward manner, an idealistic presentation, a vision of beauty—these are the requirements of a successful speaker upon this vital subject.

One of your lecturers, who has spoken before my clubs, combines these essentials of personality, and her talks always result in requests that she may speak again. I rejoice that your Society can send to our clubs such representatives to present this work, and I hope that in the future much will be done by your body along this line. I believe that the club women of the country are waiting for the right speakers to be sent to them.

NAVY YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION LECTURES

JEREMIAH HOLMES

Secretary, Brooklyn Navy Young Men's Christian Association.

It is a pleasure to come tonight to your meeting. I feel somewhat as I did once years ago when my teeth chattered a little more readily than they do now, when I had dinner at a girl's college and was the only male on the horizon. I would not have you think, however, that I am unhappy because a large proportion of my evenings are spent in an environment radically different. I am usually about this time between decks on one of Uncle Sam's great dreadnoughts. There is usually a great gun over here, and in the corner, there are anywhere from 50 to 200 of Uncle Sam's boys in their uniforms in front of me; there is a steel deck overhead, and there are more explosives than I like to think of under my feet; but so far, however, I have been spared and I trust that nothing unexpected will send me skyward, if not heavenward, sooner than I anticipate—so to change my environment as delightfully as I have tonight, is a real pleasure to me.

I am here to testify to the value of the splendid work being done by the Society with the very long name. This is one of two Societies with long names that I do not always, when I am a bit tired, attempt to recite. You know which one I have in mind tonight. They have been exceedingly helpful to us in our work. You, who are leaders in the Young Women's Christian Association, know that we are called upon for peculiar qualities and specialized messages in treating this great topic that we are all considering tonight. I feel that organizations such as ours have great difficulty in finding the right kind of speakers. If it were before a group that had no special responsibility, it would be different, but with us, emphasizing as I feel we always mean to do, the fact that we are a Christian association above everything else, that we are not an athletic club primarily, that we are not a seminary or a man's school, that we are not a social settlement, that we are not really much of anything if we are not Christian,

that all these things blended in themselves, the difficulty comes in to find the right kind of speakers.

Tonight they offer to us some excellent speakers, one in particular that reviews very largely.

I think you must all recognize that the Navy presents one of the great harm centers in this problem that we are facing to-night. If you have not thought of it before, you can readily see why it is so. The boys from the West, from the South, the boys from all over this great land, particularly the boy who wants to see the world, wants to see the great ocean, come into the Navy by thousands. We have between fifty and sixty thousand of them now and many of them have grown up in just such Christian homes as our own, and have been under mother's care, and then come, through the enlisting officers, into this great new world and they discover that nobody knows very much about and nobody cares. When they are in port, every other evening the boy can go ashore and stay all night. About every other week he can go on Saturday and remain away until Monday morning. Twice a year they are given thirty days furlough. Frequently, if home is too far away, and they have a fair amount of money, they spend it in some city like this. Freedom from restraint, then the lack of moral and spiritual influences, and the constant thought that nobody cares, starts them off on the wrong path.

You may not know we have had a great lack of chaplains. Our Navy has increased rapidly. A very large proportion of our ships have no chaplains whatever; the small ships never see a chaplain. One of our boys wrote us sometime ago: "I started a Bible class the other day with the help of the other two boys, and we started the church call and they said it was the first time the church call had been heard on this ship since the Spanish War."

It is not surprising that the peculiar temptations of the Navy come pressing in on that boy and often—and this is not surprising—he yields. I cannot tell you very well, without talking more plainly than I ought to this sort of audience, how distressing this condition is in the Navy. While a better class of men are being enlisted, while the personnel of the Navy is improving day by day, there is still an old remnant that is pretty degenerate and pretty low and the dominant influence still is the kind that drags the boy down. The chaplains of the ships, also, as far as this particular subject is concerned, are inclined to feel that it is a little out of

their province, and that the surgeon of the ship is responsible for extending knowledge of this kind. There is a surprising lack of such knowledge among the boys themselves. The instruction that the boy should get as he is growing up, that he should get in his home or in his day school or Sunday school, is sadly lacking. I asked a group of 110 men a year or so ago—"How many of you boys had any instruction at home along sex lines?" Thirty-nine men out of 110 had received some instruction along these lines. Then I said, "How many have received instructions on board this ship?" Only twenty-four had received instruction in a general way. The plan used to be, the surgeon would take the men in groups and give them certain instruction. Later it was changed so that the officers at the head of each division (the men are divided into divisions) were asked to instruct the men. Sometimes they were not fitted to do it; often they did not feel like doing it and frequently the boy suffered. Some printed information is posted on the ship, but even that is not always available. I find this lacking frequently.

We are given permission to hold various meetings down in the Navy Yard and aboard these battleships at night and we have felt that the needs of the men should be recognized and dealt with. Thus we have, after some careful investigation, concluded that alcohol and the sexual vice are the two primary discharging centers, and we mean to deal with them through the medium of the strongest speakers we can find. At first we were inclined to turn these special meetings over to our physical department. They were inclined to present the scientific aspect to the men. But it seemed to us, after further consideration, that this was not the wisest and best program and so we began to associate with the talk some of the old Gospel hymns. Then we began to swing in topics of the Old Bible. Now our policy is to present this problem from three points of view.

In the first place it is a vice. We are now giving that point of view largely to the medical men whom The Society of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis send to us. The next point, that we are emphasizing briefly, is that certain aspects of this subject are trying. We say that it is a sin; that it affects man's immortal soul; that lust in the heart is the vital problem; that the battleground of the human being is back there, and then we appeal to the men to count on God in that fight, finally closing with an

earnest prayer for God's help in the battle. That seemed to us the wisest and best treatment we could give.

As to results, they are difficult to summarize, and it is hard to secure anything that gives us very definite information. The men come very freely—the simple announcement of the fact that a talk will be given will draw them more largely than the finest program of music. They come very freely; they listen very intently; they take away any reasonable amount of printed matter that we care to hand to them, and from what we gain, the pre-dominate topic of conversation on the ship the next morning is along the line of the talk the night before!

During the three years that I have had something to do with this work, we have had largely to do with this organization under whose auspices we are meeting tonight. We have had some sixty or so of these meetings, with an attendance of about 5,000 men. There have been some specific cases of men who have told us that the lecture came in just the nick of time. I sat in my office to-night before coming over, and just outside my office in the "den" a boy sat at the piano: I recalled the time he came to us after such a meeting, when we had encouraged personal interviews with the doctor, and how he told me afterwards, "You caught me just in time." I remember another case—but I will not go into these cases, despite the fact I could enumerate a good many, but we love to feel that there have been many more. I cannot help emphasizing that I believe this work is of tremendous importance, that my own desire is that we shall do a great deal more of it—we average about 2,000 men a year. It is a pitifully small number, when you think of fifty or sixty thousand of boys in the Navy and that all the dangers of the great city are waiting to get them. We little realize what some of the dangers are that lurk and prey on them, and for our part we can say that the ministry of this organization, and from what I know of their printed matter, has been wonderfully good and my only suggestion would be—find speakers! I know we shall always have the opportunity to place them before men who are hungry for this theme. The one sad thing about it is—if they could only have known it before.

HOW A SEX EDUCATION LECTURE HELPED A SOCIAL SETTLEMENT

JOSEPH H. KOHAN

President, Social Guild of Williamsburgh

When I had been invited I thought at first it would be a meeting for the Society of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis, but now, of course, my honors have been increased.

Mr. Holmes' point of view related to the work done by the Christian Association. There is a very large work going on in our own city that of necessity is not performed by the Christian Association, and I am referring to the so-called settlements.

You know there are a great number of young men and women who are growing up to surroundings over which no one exercises any over-seeing powers or duties. The parents of these men and women are usually foreigners, and they do not themselves understand the conditions under which their boys and girls have to live and grow up, and far worse, they have no outlook.

Now each one of us, when we have the opportunity to go to the country, brings back with us certain impressions, and somehow or other impressions that linger longest in my mind are usually those of some high prominence. As you look off into the landscape and see a high hill, you come back with that in your mind; and so when I go back to my own college years I find just this very thing, and there is one prominent thing that stands most distinctly in my memory and that occurred in my junior year. At that time the men were invited to come to a lecture. That was the first lecture I had ever received on Sex Hygiene and that lecture of all lectures is the only one that is still fresh in my memory.

After being out of the University for a number of years, I became familiar with a section called Williamsburgh. Williamsburgh is a part of Brooklyn, and is probably the most congested of any portion of Brooklyn. Not only are the houses poor, but the people are miserably poor. Some of the people are poorer than those on the East Side.

It is somewhat over a year and a half ago that a handful of men and women formed a little settlement club. We could not raise any money and there was not a single agency in the entire neighborhood that was doing anything, so we began our work. We are working out a rather interesting experiment I think—so far we are paying for everything we get; we pay our way. We are a democratic organization and admit everybody.

About a year ago, shortly after we got our organization started, one of the physicians came and said, "I should like to have a lecture given on Sex Hygiene." I did not feel sure that the time was just right, but bearing in mind the lecture I had heard, I said, "We will take the chance," and applied to the Society of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis for a lecturer. Every seat was taken; the place was jammed to suffocation. One of the finest and most beautiful talks I had ever heard was given, and I could see that those present were not only interested but were carrying away a message with them. After the talk I spoke to a number of the men and found how valuable the talk had been to them.

This year the same lecturer came again, and, since the Guild had grown during the year, addressed a much larger audience. The membership of the Guild is now so large that we have organized chapters of from 100 to 125 people. These chapters, of which there are now six, meet once in six weeks. The purpose of the meeting is purely social. I have met four of these groups in the past month, and on each occasion I have talked to them about the lecture on Social Hygiene. Criticism had come to me from one of the ladies present, and I wanted to ascertain the attitude of the majority. These people are not educated people, but they are all intelligent. They are just the working boy and girl— young man and young woman. Everyone told me that the lecture was helpful and they were glad it had been given.

I asked further, "Do you feel that a single lecture is sufficient?" And a few said they thought it was because they had feared to go further into the subject, but the great majority felt that the single lecture was not sufficient, that after their interest had been aroused; that after they had been warned, it was but right and fair to them that they should know more— something more constructive. That, of course, implied that the single lecture should be followed up by further lectures and more extensive study. Of course, that brought up the question as to

whether this more intensive study should be given to mixed groups, and it was decided that it would probably be better to divide the groups.*

Now I say that work of this kind must go on. It is sometimes difficult to know just how to make your work most useful. It is quite simple, of course, in the Navy when you can have your men who are looking for reform to come to you, but it is much harder to have this knowledge brought to the average man and woman. That, I think, presents the most difficult problem. We are interested in all social reform, and it is the most important of any social problem, although we probably do the least with it.

*The Society of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis is not in favor of giving lectures to mixed groups—whenever an exception is made, the subject is the broader phase of Social Hygiene rather than any definite sex instruction.

THE RESULTS OF LECTURES TO GIRLS IN A LARGE MAIL ORDER HOUSE

MISS VIRGINIA E. SPENCER

Welfare Secretary, The National Cloak & Suit Co.

There is today increased coöperation between the home, the school and the factory. This is expressed through the continuation and coöperation schools, and the welfare departments established in nearly all industrial organizations. Increased technical efficiency is attained through the schools, while a broader conception of ethics is being developed through the welfare departments.

The business world is not only becoming a vast educational field but it is also being socialized. The questions of development of character, forming of splendid ideals and perfect self-realization through work are all vital questions in the best business organizations of today. The answers are being found through opportunities for recreation, such as special classes for dancing, music, dramatics and athletics, or more serious work in domestic training, sewing, millinery, household economics, etc. The questions of health, personal hygiene, clothes, are naturally not left out of these courses. On the social side there is probably no event that is of deeper interest, or has a more direct bearing upon this Society's problem than the party arranged to celebrate the departure of some fellow worker about to be married. The girls go on year after year organizing these affairs, happy in the thought that such an occasion will sometime be their own.

In such setting, instruction in social hygiene naturally finds a place. The home and the school have their place—a very important one—but there is also a place of great importance in business life as it is organized today. Such instruction under these circumstances becomes a part of a whole, and has a wider range and a more direct and vital interest than the instruction can possibly have which is given in the home and in the school. The subject becomes a practical one that has a direct bearing on the individual and on her future development. There comes

through such work a vivid realization of the individual's responsibility.

In September 1912, courses on sex hygiene were begun in the National Cloak & Suit Co. by one of the Society's lecturers. Each course consists of four lectures. There have been 150 lecturers to 1700 women, each lecture lasting one hour. These lectures were at first given half on the employees' time and half on the Company's time, but the course this year is being given entirely on the employees' time, and appreciation and enthusiasm have steadily increased, despite the fact that the work was no longer partly on the employees' time. One has only to hear these lectures and get the spirit of the listeners, to be convinced of their great value.

The girls are very eager and earnest and they remain of their own accord to discuss various phases of the subject with the lecturer. The questions asked show a right attitude of mind. There is no element of morbid curiosity revealed. The question has sometimes been raised whether lectures dealing with sex would not result in an increase of prurient discussion of the subject. This has not been the experience here. On the contrary, reports of some of our more thoughtful girls show that the reaction has been thoroughly wholesome and has resulted in correcting wrong information and raising ideals.

WHAT A NEW YORK CITY HIGH SCHOOL HAS DONE*

JAMES E. PEABODY

Head Dept. Biology, Morris High School

Last autumn, while conducting a conference of Massachusetts superintendents, principals, and teachers of biology, I outlined a series of propositions relative to sex instruction. They were submitted to Dr. Charles W. Eliot, President of The American Social Hygiene Association, and were modified in accordance with his constructive suggestions. The propositions were read last December at the Syracuse meeting of the New York Association of Academic Principals, and again in February at the Richmond conference of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association. The propositions seemed to meet with general approval, and in spirit, at least, they are in entire accord with the resolutions on the subject past at the Richmond and at the St. Paul meetings. These are the propositions:

1. The normal child seeks to know the source of his being, and naturally questions his father or mother.

2. The average parent either silences all questions relating to these topics or is evasive in his answers. Seldom does the child get any satisfaction from this source.

3. The child, therefore, turns to other sources of information, and two unfortunate results follow: first, much of the information he gets is untrue; and secondly, the parent loses a great opportunity to keep in sympathetic touch with some of the most vital problems of his child.

4. There are two reasons, at least, for this "conspiracy of silence" on the part of the parent: first, his ignorance of the significance of the essential facts of the reproductive process; and secondly, his incapacity to expound this subject, largely because he has no scientific vocabulary in which to express himself.

5. Both these needs of the parent of tomorrow should be supplied in biological courses that treat of the function of reproduction as a universal and beneficent process of all living things. And we might add that biology is the *only* subject in which these facts can be presented in a normal way.

6. Not only does the child need to know in clean and whole-

some terms the essential facts of reproduction, but even more thru the stormy days of youth does he need parental counsel. At this time the mother should give wise counsel to the daughter. The father, too, should explain to the boy the meaning of physiological phenomena which frequently frighten the youth and drive him to the quack doctor.

7. The fearful prevalence of venereal disease is becoming an increasing peril to our civilization, especially in cities. Most of the cases of blindness of the new-born are due to this cause. Yet the average parent gives absolutely no warning to either son or daughter of this peril.

8. It is, therefore, evident that in every community the teacher, the physician, and the clergy should do all in their power to arouse the parents of today to some sense of their responsibility in these matters. This may be done by talks with individual parents, by small conferences of interested fathers or mothers, and by a distribution among parents of carefully selected books or pamphlets in which the facts are presented in a thoroly wholesome fashion.

9. It is entirely practicable and wise, in my judgment, to present in biological courses the explanation of the reproductive processes of plants and of animals, even as high as the birds, and boys and girls in many cases are able to apply the facts and principles thus acquired to the reproduction of human beings.

10. Sex hygiene, however, is an entirely different matter. It involves discussion of the personal problems of girls and boys, problems which most of them have not discust even with parents or the family physician. And it is this aspect of sex-education which we, as teachers, hesitate to enter upon in the classroom, at least until a somewhat clearer trail has been blazed for us. Yet it is this very practical kind of instruction that is sorely needed by our boys and girls.

In the first place, it may be pertinent to ask why it should be expected that the average teacher, especially one who is young and unmarried, should be any better fitted to give this instruction to boys and girls than are the parents. And even tho the teacher may have received adequate instruction in sex-hygiene, the problem of presenting the needed information is most difficult.

In New York City over 40 per cent. of the high school pupils are taught in classes where boys and girls recite together, and in

the smaller cities and towns of the country mixt classes are practically universal. But, urge the advocates of sex-hygiene, we should separate the two sexes and then give the necessary instruction. If much definite teaching of the subject is to be given in the public schools, this separation must of course be made, but experience has shown that when one part of a division is isolated for special instruction, unfortunate self-consciousness on the part of pupils seems to be the inevitable result.

11. That this subject may be taught in such a way as to influence the *life* of our boys and girls the instruction must be given by men and women who have high ideals. It was Emerson, was it not, who said "What you are speaks so loud that I can not hear what you say." It is useless and worse, then, for a frivolous mother or immoral father, or a characterless teacher to attempt to enter this field of sacred duty. To be successful here mere knowledge is not enough. The problem can be solved only when parents, pastors and pedagogues co-operate wholeheartedly in this great movement. In the New York City schools biology is required thruout the first year of the high school, and just as much time in the curriculum (namely five periods per week) is assigned to this subject as is given to any other in the first-year course. A similar time allotment is becoming more and more the rule thruout New York state. In outlining the course in elementary biology, our committees have constantly aimed to bring into the foreground the relations of biology to human welfare. Hence, we are spending relatively little time in teaching our young students comparative morphology, microscopic anatomy, and theories of evolution. Instead we emphasize the functions of all living things—food-getting, digestion, assimilation, respiration, and reproduction—and we devote a large amount of time to the economic importance of plants and animals, to the necessity of tree preservation, insect extermination, bird protection, to the hygiene of the teeth and skin, to healthful diet, efficient ventilation, prevention of disease, and to hygienic habits of study. That our students on the whole are thoroly interested in this subject is evidenced by the fact that when over three hundred of those in the first part of the second year were asked which of their four first-year subjects they enjoyed most, the answer of 53 per cent. was "biology." Only 34 per cent. however, stated that biology was their easiest subject.

Two years ago the city adopted a new biology elective of five periods a week for our third and fourth-year students, a course devoted to comparative physiology, personal hygiene, home and city sanitation. In our own school this term there are seven divisions of students (over 200 boys and girls) who are following this course and here we have abundant opportunities to be of service in giving to those who are to be the teachers and homemakers of tomorrow some of the wide applications of biology to human welfare.

Such is the field that has opened up to us biology teachers, and in presenting the subject even in the first year we believe we are helping our 2000 boys and girls to answer some of the deepest questions of their lives—namely, those that concern the perpetuation of life. In the plant study especially in connection with flowers we lay a broad foundation for the study of reproduction, and introduce terms like sperm cell, egg cell, fertilization, and embryo, terms which later are employed in considering the reproductive processes of insects, fishes, frogs, and birds.

In the elective courses we can carry sex instruction much further. Even in mixt classes our students discuss in scientific terms, and apparently without any self-consciousness the function of reproduction in all groups of animals including the mammals. In this connection we emphasize the deep meaning of the home as a prime factor in evolution, the importance of right choices in marriage, and the tremendous significance of heredity both to the individual and to society. No part of this study makes a deeper impression than does the contrast between the heritage in the Jonathan Edwards and the so-called Kallikak family. Many have been the expressions of appreciation that have come to us from our most thoughtful boys and girls for this frank presentation of human problems.

But classroom instruction specific even as this does not touch the real heart of the sex problem of the adolescent boy; and some of us, remembering the experiences of our own boyhood, have long felt that we ought to go much further with some of the boys whom we had come to know rather intimately. For the past ten years I have been in charge of the school printing squad and another of our biology teachers, Mr. Mann, has been coach of one of the most successful high school gun squads in the United States. Here we have a group of fifty to sixty picked boys who

know and trust us. Last year we divided these boys into groups of eight to fifteen each, and invited them to meet us in one of the laboratories after school hours. There we reviewed the whole process of reproduction from the lowest organisms up thru the flowering plants to the vertebrates and man; we warned them of the dangers of sensual indulgence and of the perils of venereal disease. But thruout all our discussion we emphasized the splendid calls to chivalry in the treatment of the opposite sex, the rewards that are open to those who live clean, manly lives.

Some of the boys who have attended these conferences have organized other groups of their boy friends for this instruction in sex matters. As many as 40 have been in attendance for over two hours at some of these meetings. The response of the boys in these conferences has always been most satisfactory. Scarcely any of them have received the needed instruction at home. In not a few cases they have told us of their terrors on reading quack advertisements, and of their feeling of relief on learning the truth. In all this work we are most fortunate in having the hearty support and sympathy of our principal, of the city superintendent and of many of his associates.

We men teachers could, of course, do nothing to instruct the girls in these more intimate matters, and none of our women teachers felt herself prepared for this work. The girls, however, need this personal counsel perhaps even more than the boys do, and several of those who were taking the advanced biology asked that further instructions be given. We were most fortunate in being able to secure the assistance of one of the lecturers of The Society of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis. We told our senior girls that the first lecture would be at 2.45 in one of the study halls. Seventy-five girls appeared and for two and a half hours listened and plied the lecturer with questions. And, if you could have seen their shining eyes as they left the building, you would have become convinced that the problem of sex instruction was solved so far as these girls were concerned. At the second lecture, 175 girls crowded into the study hall and so eager were those who had missed the first lecture to hear it that they persuaded the lecturer to come again the next week. Other girls in the Senior class who had not taken the elective course in biology felt so keenly the need for this special help that they

brought notes of approval from their mothers, and persuaded the lecturer to repeat her talks for them.

The lecturer, knowing my deep interest in the subject, kindly allowed me to look over the eighty or more written questions that were handed in. Most of them showed real hunger for wholesome information to counteract the misinformation they had received. We count ourselves most fortunate in securing this lecturer's promise to continue the work and we plan to have conference hours when the girls can consult her as to their individual problems. Can you see any possible danger in this movement? We urge our boys and girls to talk over freely with their parents what they have heard, but not to discuss these matters with their schoolmates of either sex.

The problem of sex education is so tremendous, especially in a large city like New York, that any work a few individuals may do seems small indeed in comparison to the needs of the hour. In spite, however, of the crying need of widespread sex instruction, I have grave doubts as to the efficacy of lectures given by outside physicians or other physiological experts. This method, as you know, was tried in Chicago and abandoned. Sex education is too vital and personal to be given in a wholesale fashion. Children need especially in these matters the individual touch and counsel of those whom they already know and trust.

In conclusion, may I say that I am optimistic enough to believe that at least the next generation of teachers and parents will be trained to deal with the problem far more intelligently and courageously than have we. In order that this may be accomplished we need to curb the reckless agitator for compulsory sex education, to give sane and wholesome courses dealing with this subject in all normal schools, colleges, and theological seminaries, to lead the children in our public schools to appreciate something of the far-reaching importance of the process of reproduction, and above all, to seek in every way to arouse in parents a feeling of deep responsibility in these matters to their children and to society.

*This article contains the substance of an address delivered by Prof. Peabody before the National Education Association at St. Paul, July 1914, before 1000 people.

EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF LECTURES

Lecture at The Studio Club of New York on March 9, 1915:

"The lecture was a most helpful and inspiring one. The girls lingered for nearly an hour after the lecture to ask questions and advice on special problems of marriage as they saw it. I was greatly pleased at the results."

Lecture at Henry St. Settlement on April 15, 1915:

"An extremely interesting, courteous, and responsive group of girls. These girls asked numerous intelligent questions. It has come back to us that they reported to their mothers much of what they heard at the talks. And it is gratifying to learn that the mothers expressed themselves as being greatly pleased that such talks had been arranged for their daughters."

Lecture at the Tiny Tim Society on April 5, 1915:

"The lecture was admirable in every way and thoroughly interested every woman who was present. The subject was treated so frankly and yet with so much earnestness and sincerity that it made a deep impression upon the listeners, and many of the mothers present expressed their pleasure at hearing these matters presented in such a thoughtful and satisfactory manner. I feel that it has been a great privilege to hear the lecturer."

SOCIETY OF SANITARY AND MORAL PROPHYLAXIS,
105 West 40th Street, New York.

GENTLEMEN:

Much to my regret, I shall be away from the city on February twenty-eighth, and therefore cannot testify as you wish to have me.

Your Society is doing a great and very necessary work. Mothers need the lectures; they should know the dangers to which their young people are exposed, and they should be able to advise them from a reasonable and scientific standpoint. Merely saying "Don't" is of no use. Mothers must be taught so that they may teach the rising generation.

With hearty good wishes for the success of your Society, and
thanks for its helpfulness in the past,

Yours sincerely,

KATHERINE D. BLAKE,
*President, Association of Women Principals of
Public Schools of New York City.*

SOCIETY OF SANITARY AND MORAL PROPHYLAXIS,
105 West 40th Street, New York.

GENTLEMEN:

We, the members of the Lincoln Literary Club, of the Bronx
House, who have attended your lectures, extend to you a most
hearty vote of thanks.

We are unable to express our gratitude for your kindness,
as you have so emphatically, so strenuously, and in such an in-
teresting way, enlightened us upon subjects from which we have
derived much good.

We are most thankful to you for explaining us the meaning of
“*Loyalty*,” as from that time and on we have realized the value of
that habit, and we are practicing it most seriously.

Hoping that we will be lucky enough to meet you again, I am,

Respectfully yours,

SIMON R. BEHMAN,

Secretary.

New York City.

CONSTRUCTIVE PREVENTIVE WORK THROUGH MORAL EDUCATION

DR. MABEL S. ULBICH, Minneapolis, Minn.

*Lecturer for The Commission on Social Morality to Normal
Schools, Colleges and Universities*

I suppose every reformer goes through practically the same evolutionary stages. There is the stage of fine enthusiasm when he or she is out first and foremost to cure the evil which seems above all evils to menace the race. Then follows the inevitable stage of discouragement, until that faith which is the very essence of all true reform brings out the idea of prevention, and he starts forth with new vigor. Then I think he begins to be tremendously fascinated by the possibilities of law. It seems now as if that were inevitably the way to get at the problem. It is not until he goes through a great deal of pain and suffering that he becomes convinced at last that no law is ever more than a sieve, unless it is backed up by public opinion.

Then at last comes to him the splendid idea of working primarily for the next generation. I think we all reach the point, where realizing that we probably cannot hope to see our work really tell for very much, we plan to stir up enough excitement and interest in the particular subject in which we are interested to feel that it is going on into the next generation. It is the next generation in which I am particularly interested. It is because of the fact that I have become convinced that the only way to solve any of these problems in which we are so involved is through the child, that I am now going around to the universities and talking to the future mothers and teachers.

I do not mean by this that law can not do anything, but law can do very little until we have the necessary education to demand the enforcement as well as the passage of laws. I believe social justice and industrial justice can do more to-day than law, but these also we shall not get until we have more social education. Our real point of contact, therefore, should be the child, training him not only to the point of resisting disease, of resisting temptation, but also to the point of demanding justice and fair-

ness and decency for himself and all those with whom he associates. When we reach that point in education, we can talk with much more intelligence of these great problems of prostitution, etc.

During the past several years I have talked to mothers and I have talked with many hundreds of girls, and out of these interviews I have gained rather definite convictions as to the kind of sex education from which we may hope anything at all.

I believe, then, that the most important part of all this education in morals—of course, that is what it means ultimately—is the education of the preadolescent child, that if we can get for a child a real moral back-bone by the time of puberty, a body and mind as well disciplined, well controlled, as is consistent with the limitations of child psychology, after that time our problem is going to be comparatively simple. Now, of course, the only way to reach the pre-adolescent child is through the mothers, through the fathers—although I do not hope very much from the fathers—and through the school teachers. The trouble has been in the past that we have laid too much emphasis on such questions as how much we should tell the child, how old the child should be when we begin to tell, etc. Unquestionably in an audience of this sort I do not have to discuss whether or not a child should be told the stork story or whether he should be told the truth in regard to the origin of life. But even here there are doubtless many differences of opinion as to how this information should be imparted and probably an exaggerated sense of the danger of doing it wrongly. The mere facts of sexual reproduction after all play a comparatively small part in sex education. If we start young enough and tell the truth, without any self-consciousness or evasion, I do not think we can go far wrong.

Of course, tonight I shall not have time to go into the details of this education of the pre-adolescent child, but I want to lay stress on the fact that every time the child is allowed to get its own way when he should not have it, we are undermining his sex control later on. There is not the slightest doubt in my mind that our greatest trouble today arises from the mere lack of discipline. I do not believe there ever was a time in the history of this country when our young people were so flabby morally as today. I do not mean to say, immoral. I mean so morally soft—so hesitating as to just what is right or wrong—so experimental

in their attitude toward ethical questions—so shifty in their real moral point of view. Of course, we can not blame the young people; we *can* blame their environment in large cities. And we have to admit, if we are honest, that the American home is about as undisciplined a place as we can find anywhere. The education of the child should start at birth. When you push a pacifier into a baby's mouth when he cries, you have taken the first downward step.

Recently I was talking with a physician at the University of Michigan. We were having a very frank discussion as to what we might hope for with regard to a single standard. He told me that the result of his work was this conviction: If he could get the training of a boy young enough and keep him until he was ten, he would trust him anywhere; but that the great difficulty of boys in colleges now was that their sex interests had been precociously developed and stimulated by smuttiness in school, and by utter lack of discipline in early home life.

There are two very definite sides to the sex education of young children. There is the very intimate side which could only be done properly in the home, and there is the impersonal, biological side, which could very well be done in school. There is no reason why these two should conflict. At any rate, the first point to start with is to get our moral backbone. Again, there should be a definite effort, I believe, to arouse in the young child a conception of the dignity and worth of the human body. (Illustration of children taking pride in their height, etc.) It is perfectly possible to develop on that basis a real solid health ideal of immense value later on. Of course, I know that many clean people are immoral, but I also know that, broadly speaking, physical health and cleanliness make for morality.

The child by the age of twelve should have a clean-cut, simple conception of the biological laws of life. He should have that in such an impersonal way that he takes it for granted just as he takes anything else in nature for granted. He should recognize, although not consciously, that he is one link in this great chain of life and that the laws which govern him govern all life—that he is no exception. He should also have gotten to the point where he appreciates what self control is, and what it is going to mean all through his life in every way, and especially in choosing between right and wrong. He should have a definite idea of what is right

and what is wrong. It does not make any difference whether his idea is a correct or an ultimate one or not, so long as it is a clearly defined idea. At every stage in his life he must feel that he has the power of choice.

One of the great advantages of early biological training is that the child gains a vocabulary. Any one who has talked on sex subjects to an untrained audience knows how many difficulties arise by reason of the lack of a common vocabulary. I remember in speaking to factory girls how extremely difficult it was because we did not speak the same language. The terms I had at my control were the technical, scientific terms. The terms they had I did not understand. So every time I used any unusual word at all, I had to give a definition of it all over again. It made the process extremely slow and difficult. The advantages of a vocabulary are plainly obvious when we get into the vital teens. As soon as the child is well into the adolescent stage his sex education should be less of an objective type, more and more subjective in its tendency. Now the main concern should be with what we may call the more esthetic and spiritual side of life. But no sex education should ever be labeled as such. The child should get his knowledge without his becoming consciously aware that he is being educated along the line of sex. This is true of every stage in his education. Much of adolescent sex education might well be built around the idea of family.

Personally I believe that the feasibility of a true monogamy for society in general is yet to be proved. I have no doubt that we are going to see very great changes in the next generation as regards this problem of sex morality. I believe that monogamy is to be tried out, and I believe the result is going to be one of two things. We are going to have a real monogamy or we are going to have an honest polygamy. We are not going to endure any longer the sort of thing that we have had in the past. If we are to have polygamy, very well; we are going to have an honest one. Most of us do not believe we are going to be driven to that, however. We believe we are going to be able to teach and develop an attitude toward sex and love which shall engender a real monogamy. This sort of thing is being discussed by adolescent girls in the universities today. Many of these girls are interested in these questions without knowing exactly why, or how, or what they are interested in. Almost none of them have any honest,

actual understanding of what "family" means. Almost none have any idea of the thousands of years the race has toiled to make the family as we know it possible. Many believe, or at least suspect, that the family is an old idea which will go out after a while. They have no conception of the fundamental roots of family life. We have of course in this country many kinds of girls. We have the very feminine, intensely conservative girl, and in about the same proportion as we had her before. That sort of girl is usually a good student, usually conscientious, usually not particularly interesting, and does not often do very much afterward, either good or bad. There are also today in every college a good many girls who are extremely alert, full of tremendous curiosity about life, and who are more radical than any group of girls in the history of the world outside of Russia perhaps. These girls are a problem all by themselves; they are the girls who come to you with the most astonishing questions. They are the girls for whom you have to have some reason for right living, apart from that of morals or religion. I used to think that one of the most stimulating appeals worth urging was that of the necessity of pure motherhood. I find, however, that many of these girls seem to care comparatively little about the matter of children. What they are particularly interested in, is the excitement and thrill of the love which is to come to them. They have an entirely different conception of love from their mothers, and they talk about it. The one idea of many of these girls is to find the proper mate who is going to develop their personality, the highest expression of their individuality. (Illustration of a girl, very intelligent, had more than one degree, about twenty-six years old. We were talking about the problem of monogamy and she spoke of it with bated breath. She was tremendously uplifted. Then she got talking about soul affinities. I stopped her and said: "It doesn't seem to me that your two points of view coincide very well." "O, but I mean progressive monogamy," was her reply. She went on to explain how the mate who could develop your personality and reach the very greatest heights with you at one decade was probably not at all the person who could reach these heights in the next decade.) Hence I believe every high school should have a course on the family. Boys and girls should be taught how vital to civilization is this relation; they should be taught how, as far as we know, it is the only ideal from which we

can expect any kind of finely evolved children. One of the greatest mistakes we are making in America now is to let our young people grow up with the idea that the sex relation may be a transitory one. Whether or not you believe in divorce, whether or not you believe divorce should be more free or difficult, the fact remains that it is a very dangerous thing for boys or girls to feel that divorce is just across the way if married life is not what they expected it would be.

Another thing which should be taught to boys especially is the great sin of impersonality. I have talked considerably to men about this problem of prostitution, and over and over again I have been convinced that if every boy could be brought up to realize that the greatest sin in all the world was to treat any human being as a *thing*, as a mere commodity, it would be utterly impossible to have any prostitution at all. It is largely because men are allowed to regard these women as not women but creatures existing for their purposes of lust that we have prostitution. This sin of impersonality permeates all our associations. It is the basis of many of our ordinary difficulties. Here again is an opportunity of education almost wholly neglected. In order to establish this sense of individual responsibility and to uproot the impersonal attitude, I would introduce live courses in civics in the schools. I do not mean that children be taught the Constitution or the Declaration of Independence. I refer to real civics, the study of vital social problems which have to do with the civic rights or responsibilities of all the members of a community.

Until very recently I did not believe there was anything to be gained in scaring young people into being good, but I have come to feel that there is a certain stage in the life of a boy (we will say between fifteen and seventeen) when he feels that there is nothing anybody can tell him; when it is almost impossible to get him to do anything which he thinks at all sentimental; when he is simply overflowing with the sense of his own ego and power to assert his manhood. At that stage a little wholesome fear often does a great deal of good. This is the only time, however, when it does do good, and then probably with only a limited number. I have known instances where a boy has been carried through those years safely when he has been only sternly warned of the consequences of loose living. To give him one straightforward talk (by a person of authority, of course) as to what venereal

disease means often will be of a very distinctive value. I doubt whether fear has any pedagogical value for girls. No girl should be left ignorant of the facts of venereal disease, and their possible bearing on her own health and that of her children. But I deplore greatly the custom of many "sex" lecturers of dealing out to girl audiences representing all ages, overwhelming statistics as to the probable immorality of fathers, brothers, lovers, and friends. To convince a sensitive adolescent girl that ninety per cent. of all the men she has loved and trusted are tainted physically and mentally is a sorry victory for our "Cause"—even if it were true.

Our knowledge of sex irradiations is only in its infancy. That the creative instinct manifests itself in many forms we all agree. The relation of art to sex is surely this, that all creative expression arises from one root. Whether we create a picture or a baby may depend upon many circumstances. But the impulse to create is the primary need which impels now in one direction, now in another. If we recognize this fact, we begin to see that valuable as are the family physician's prescriptions of cold baths, exercise, hardships, etc., for the physical re-direction of "the life-force," the creative arts offer even greater possibilities in our pedagogy of adolescence. And not the arts alone. (Perhaps many of you recall that wonderful, passionate consecration of the young men and women of Russia in the last revolution; how they went joyously into tasks which meant inevitable death or worse. Perhaps you have not heard that when the revolution was quelled, and these same adolescents had no longer outlet for their passion for service, there broke over Russia the greatest wave of sex immorality that has ever been known.) There is no more constructive preventive opportunity to hand than the active encouragement on our part of every form of self-expression to the youth in the teens. The boy should know that he, like John Stuart Mills, may do his most valuable work when he has conquered the desire of physical expression and turned his passion into the channel of intellectual accomplishment.

From the youth of each generation the race gains the incalculable gift of the renewal of creative power—creative power along all lines. In the past we have rashly allowed this power to find its way undirected, taking it more or less for granted that the physical expression was its only "natural" one. Too often

the result has spelt ruin and tragedy. Today we are just beginning to learn better. To suppress evil, negative laws can do little—perhaps nothing. Close every dance-hall, every brothel, every public park if you will by act of legislature. The “life-force” will still be altogether too much for you. You might as well attempt to dam a rushing current without widening its bed. Our business is not suppression, but re-direction—the opening up of new channels. If occasionally we seem to aim at repression, it is not for the sake of repression, but to insure supreme expression when our force has gathered its full power. Fully to understand the possibilities of irradiations is to recognize that both the gratification of sex and its denial may be equally desirable, that the evil of singleness is not that one leads a so-called “unnatural” life, but that all too often no other outlet has been provided and sex becomes inverted or even perverted.

Finally one more word as to why we have had so little success in legislating prostitution out of existence. Thus far we have failed to take into account that the problem has two phases—one concerning the morals of the individual, the other the social efficiency of the community. No laws, however well-framed, can make men and women moral. If the health of innocent as well as guilty were not involved, if there were no economic and other pressure driving girls involuntarily into the life, if in short prostitution were not a menace to the well-being of a community as such, then indeed we should have no reason for legislating against it. Legislation has no more power to control a man’s individual sex-morality than it has to control his truth-telling habits. Only when his sex morality endangers society may law intervene. Many of our law makers have entirely overlooked this distinction with the result that the bills passed have merely become dead letters at once, and served to convince the “average” man of the inevitability of continued prostitution.

We must confine our law making to social evils if we expect results, while we attack personal morality through every channel of education.



**The Society of
Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis**

Prince A. Morrow, M.D., Founder

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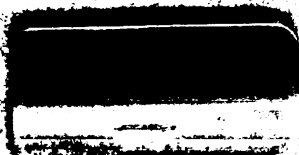
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